

Negro, Colonization of - 1936

# State Senate LEGISLATURE Passes Negro OF VIRGINIA Migration Plan STARTS DRIVE

## Resolution Is Termed "Hot Air" By Aged Legislator

(Reprint from last week's City Edition)  
RICHMOND, Va. — Though the move was classed as "hot air" by one member of the legislative body, the State Senate Wednesday in a joint House resolution memorialized Congress to provide means by which Americans of African descent could migrate to Liberia for colonization if they so desired.

Though he did not oppose the resolution's passage, 87-year-old Senator Henry Wickham, classed the measure as "hot air."

A delegation of Virginia Negroes had requested the General Assembly to act on the resolution; it was asserted Wednesday by Senator R. O. Norris, chairman of the committee reporting the resolution to the Senatorial group.

Senator Norris said that he had been led to believe that 400,000 Negroes had signed a petition asking President Roosevelt to seek the approval of the United States Congress in the efforts of African descendants in America to return to the Dark Continent. The migration, Senator Norris explained, would not be compulsory.

Most of the group, the senator asserted, wanted to go to Liberia.

Located on the extreme Western coast of Africa, Liberia was founded by freed American slaves in 1822 and declared a free and independent republic on July 26, 1847. Its inhabitants are mainly natives and descendants of freed American Negro slaves.

The Liberian resolution was passed by the Virginia Senate without contest.

Not in the nature of a law, the resolution merely signifies to the national legislative body that the move meets with the approval of Virginia lawmakers.

Virginia statesmanship on the African re-patriation question."

### Adopt Resolution

Previously passed unanimously by the House of Delegates in Virginia, the Senate adopted the Bazile resolution by a vote of 25 to 7. The Senate concurred in resolving to "memorialize the congress of the United States" on the plan.

Race leaders and organizations disturbed by this bombshell which threatens to wreak havoc on all the progress the race has made in this country since emancipation toward the end of establishing the black man as a full, free citizen of the United States, roundly condemned the action of the Peace Movement of Ethiopia subtly working toward this end.

"Our place and home is the United States where we were born and where we, by the Constitution, are citizens," one leader stated.

"Action by this group of misled Negroes shows a cowardly attitude of running away from a problem instead of standing and fighting it out. Our forefathers sacrificed and died that we might establish our rights in America. Why should we now follow a twisted conception of the race's salvation and play our cards right into the white man's hands?"

### 400,000 On Petition

Petitions containing the names of 400,000 members of the Race, and sent to President Roosevelt last year by leaders and workers in the Peace Movement of Ethiopia, which has branches established strategically all over the country, were the hold card in the effort to get the resolution passed by the Virginia Senate, Mrs. M. M. L. Gordon, 4451 State street, president-general of the movement, told **The Chicago Defender**.

Mrs. Gordon organized the movement in 1932 in Chicago with the purpose in mind of "repatriating" all unemployed, hopeless Negroes off the relief rolls, to be returned to Africa where they can develop themselves in a country under black leadership where their opportunities will not be limited, and where the 'thousands of others' who desire to be free from slavery and who still have a job can go."

### To Rid U.S. of Blacks

Mrs. Gordon's idea, it seems, is to the effect that the United States would willingly foot the bill to rid the country of the black man, so undesirable in the white man's scheme of things. To aid him in that respect, and at the same time advance the program and ideals of the Peace Movement, she and her organization have dedicated their efforts to that end.

Informed of what had taken place representatives of various organizations in Chicago, striving for full rights for the Race under the Constitution of the United States right here in America, pointed out that

no scientists were mentioned as being long to the Peace Movement which would return the black American to Africa. No engineers, no doctors, specialists in diseases were mentioned, and no money, outside of the sought-for assistance from the Federal Government, was apparent.

"It would take," declared one leader, "more than \$500,000,000,000 to float a proposition of this sort and then that sum would apply only to the backing of highly developed farmers and men representing every science.

"In Brazil, just two days from Africa, black subjects are not leaving for the African continent. Instead, they are working out their own destiny right in Brazil. They have the Fronte Negra, an organization of black and white people which bends all its efforts in Brazil toward seeing that all people, regardless of color or race, get an equal chance.

"Not for such a plan were the lives of Wendell Phillips, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Lovejoy, John Brown and other noble abolitionists dedicated. These people and the thousands of others who gave their lives for our freedom, would turn over in their graves if such a twisted conception materialized, and ask, 'Is this what we sacrificed for?'"

Delegate Bazile's successful resolution in the Virginia assembly pointed out that "there is valuable land sparsely populated in the republic of Liberia, a portion of which is reserved in trust for American Negro colonists, and many of our Negroes evidence a desire to live in an independent nation of Negroes and strive to achieve a high and honorable race destiny."

Opposition to the measure came from Senator Henry T. Wicham of Hanover county who fought the resolution on the ground that he "personally did not wish his Negro friends in Hanover to think he did not want them or that they do not want him."

"It is worse than hot air," he shouted. "I defy any Senator to mention a Negro who would want to go."

At this stage, reports from Richmond states, Senator Robert O. Norris of Lancaster county, brandished a paper and declared: "I do not know whether there are any in my district, but I hold in my hand the names of 400,000 other Negroes who want to go." He held a copy of the petition to President Roosevelt by the 400,000 members of the race, requesting that they be taken off the dole in this country and enabled to go to Africa "to work out their own destiny."

Senator Norris then went on to remark that a group of Race people had appeared before the special Senate committee in support of the resolution and added that he did not feel Virginia could stand in the way of those who wish this preliminary action on the voluntary proposal taken.

White Virginians were elated over the success of the resolution, it was said. John Powell of Richmond, a jacker of the movement in that city, said: "Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation did not give the Negro true freedom, nor did the 14th and 15th

Amendments. True emancipation of the Negro was inaugurated by action of the Virginia assembly on Capitol Hill today."

NAUGATUCK, CONN.  
NEWS

MAR 3 - 1936

## Back to Liberia

New interest is aroused in Liberia, the black republic on the Ivory coast of western Africa, by a resolution offered in the Virginia legislature to permit colonization by residents of African descent.

A state senator talks of a petition signed by 400,000 American Negroes asking the United States government to provide means for such emigration.

There seems to be no definite information about such a movement. Very likely many Negroes in this country, during the worst of the depression, felt like going to Africa or almost anywhere else. But now that there are jobs again, they probably feel otherwise.

Liberia is said to be a fertile place, with rich resources, and could doubtless support more than its present population of about three persons to the square mile. The climate is supposed to be congenial to colored people. It was established, too, as a haven for American Negroes. But in almost a century of existence it has attracted few.

VINELAND, N. J.

## JOURNAL

MAR 2 - 1936

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MAR 21 1936

## A FREE NEGRO STATE

THERE is under way today a modest little movement which some day might have important economic effects in America. Headed by the Rev. Sterling M. Means, a Negro preacher from Toledo, a small group of men now in Columbus are earnestly working for a large migration of American Negroes to the republic of Liberia.

The idea of a free Negro state is generations old. Abraham Lincoln advocated it, and so did Henry Clay. Its advocates feel that in their own nation the Negro race would have a far better chance for realization of its ideals and greater freedom of self-expression than is possible in nations largely populated and fully controlled by whites. The rebirth of interest in the idea, particularly at a time when the economic troubles of the Negro are the greatest in history, opens an interesting field for study.

### Raps Negro Colonization

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—I read in your Monday's issue, March 23, where E. S. Cox of Richmond spoke in response to a letter that was previously written by Julius Wilson, asking for information about lands in Africa for the "American Negro colonists." He also stated how joyful it would be for the Negroes to be home at last.

I wish to express to Julius Wilson, also to E. S. Cox, on the behalf of the Negroes in America that this country is just as much a home to the Negroes as it is to them, as far as they know. The best that they, or any other white friends, can do, if the Negroes are becoming so distasteful to them, is to seek lands for themselves and live on them, instead of trying to find lands for the Negroes.

The Negroes of today were bred and born in America and have been recognized as American citizens, and to pick them up and place them on an island or a colony would be a great injustice to them. The better class of Negroes are taxpayers and lawabiding citizens, and they are not ingrates on the communities in which they live, considering the disadvantages they have to confront.

I think it would be a grand idea to begin cleaning our country of undesirables of each race before trying to clean out the poor respectable, as well as disresponsible, of the Negro race. Also let me say, in particular to Julius Wilson, that it is a matter of impossibility to be without the Negro, on earth or after he

leaves this earth, as wherever he may be, there also he will find the Negroes, as the same God that rules over him rules over the Negro. I am sure many white people are becoming very much bored with nagging gossip on what to do with the Negro. DAISY W. JOHNSON. Richmond.

## The Secret Is Out

At THE time the Virginia General Assembly passed a resolution memorializing Congress to take steps looking toward the organization of the American Negro in the African republic of Liberia, leading Negroes, whom they did there was considerable curiosity as not identify. Major Cox does not to the origin of the action. The substantiate his claim to represent- cat is out of the bag; it was ERNEST ing up to 3,000,000 Negroes. As a SEVIER COX, noted for his long ef- natter of fact, we frankly do not forts at preaching the horrible ef- believe 3,000,000 Negroes in this facts of racial admixture. He was country are interested at all in pull- in large part responsible for the ing up stakes and moving to Africa, Virginia law describing as a Negro bag and baggage. There is, of any person having a trace of Ne- course, occasional agitation for a gro blood, however remote. He has "49th State" to be occupied solely written one or more books of the by Negroes, and the Garvey doc- "Rising Tide of Color" type. One trine of back-to-Africa still has its of them is "White America". advocates here and there. But it

He claimed in a letter published in the Richmond Times-Dispatch of March 23 that he "represented between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 Negroes when I appeared before the committees in the Legislature. Many Negroes want to live in a gro nation, but there should be ernment aid if colonization is successful." which weakens them. This is not Earlier, on March 13, one C. C. CAMPBELL, of New York City, whom described himself as honorary president of the Eugenics Research Association, hailed with glee in letter to the same newspaper then of the Negro's but of the white Caucasian-sponsored back-to-Africa movement that we thought diedly prove to anyone who looks about with the now defunct Garvey move- ment. He sees it as a way to halt "mongrelization" of the white race referring frequently to the Nazi methods in Germany as fine examples of what must be done to save America. He would have all state legislatures take similar action, so that shipping America's Negroes back to Africa might become "a practical possibility."

We do not believe that any but those who fanatically believe there has been, is, or can be "racial integrity" need any argument to be convinced that the colonization plan is impossible, impracticable, and untenable. The Negro came to America, albeit as slaves, almost as soon as the first permanent white settlers. He has helped build this country. He is as indigenous to it as any others who live here. He is American as well as Negro. He has African antecedents, but

every other people in America, except the American Indians, have foreign antecedents. He is here